

Our language is slowly but surely being infiltrated by a series of what may best be described as "weird" words. We feel that you, as a patron of the language, should be alerted to the invasion now in progress, so that appropriate countermeasures may be planned and put into effect.

It is not easy to characterize the words in question. Each of them consists of 7 or 8 letters; the vowels of the alphabet are either entirely absent or represented by a solitary Y; the letters P, L, and K (or Q) are invariably included; the letter X is usually, though not always, present; and the word or name is unpronounceable by normal standards.

The first of the weird words seems to have been one that made its debut in Lyman Frank Baum's *The Magic of Oz*. The word was PYRZQXGL, a magic word that, pronounced properly, made it possible for its user to transform either himself or anyone else into anything desired.

A second invader has appeared in a popular comic strip, Al Capp's *Li'l Abner*. We refer to Joe BTF SPLK, the world's worst jinx, a character who wanders into and out of that comic strip, more or less at his pleasure.

A third intruder has been haunting the pages of *Superman* comic books for a good many years: Mr. MXYZTPLK, the name of Superman's fifth-dimensional nemesis. This name is pronounced something like "mix-yez-tip-lik." In more recent stories, the name has been altered to MXYZPTLK. Proliferating rapidly, the name has also bred its reversal, KLPTZYXM or KLTPZYXM, which the imp must be tricked into saying to make him return to his own dimension.

The newest invader, spotted in the pages of the September, 1967 issue of *Intelligence*, the Mensa Journal, is Simon QXYPTKL, identified as the translator into English of a letter to the Editor of *Intelligence* written by one of the "green men" who have arbitrarily been excluded from membership in Mensa. The letter points out that little green men have contributed much to the founding and nurturing of the American nation, and that the systematic segregation practiced by such groups as Mensa is the basic cause for the rise of the militant call for "green power."

Readers of WORD WAYS! The invaders must be stopped! It's them or us, to put it bluntly! We request your help in locating more of the weird words. Report each one you encounter to us, so that we may spread the alarm. We are organizing for a ruthless "search and destroy" operation against "W. W." The enemy multiplies rapidly; unless every existing invader is exterminated today, it will be too late a few years hence, and we shall be overwhelmed by the alien hordes.

Report a word and save a life!